The Highlander

Thursday May 8, 2025 | Issue 688

INSIDE: NATIONAL CONFERENCE COMES TO HALIBURTON PAGE 14 FREE

A fire raged inside the main lodge of the Wigamog Inn for approximately eight hours May 3, damaging the upper half of the structure. *Submitted.*

Wig blaze reported to fire marshal, OPP

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al fire chief Dan Chumbley says the May 3 fire that engulfed the main lodge of the abandoned Wigamog Inn property has been reported to the Haliburton Highlands OPP and the Ontario Fire Marshall's office.

The chief said the department was notified of the fire at approximately 4:20 a.m. on Saturday. Thirteen firefighters from Haliburton were involved in the response, with the assistance of four volunteers from Minden Hills. They were on-site for more than eight hours tackling the blaze.

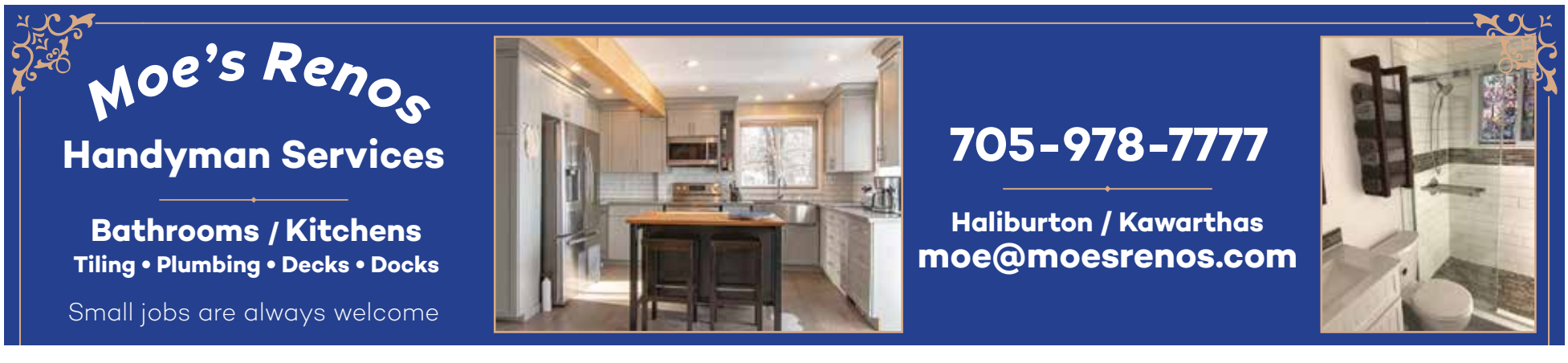
"There were flames coming through the roof at arrival. The fire was contained to the upper floor," Chumbley told *The Highlander.* He said the last truck left the site at 12:46 p.m.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office is called to investigate fires and explosions, particularly those with fatalities, serious injuries or suspected arson.

Dating back to the early 1900s, the Wig has sat vacant for years. While current owners, Aurora Group, bought the site in 2015, promises to redevelop have fallen flat. The property has been slated for demolition since mid-2022, with workers tearing down a handful of the 36 accessory buildings between April and June 2023.

Work has been paused since, with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) following up on reports of at-risk species living at the site. Last year, the ministry confirmed the presence of

Continued on page 2



Highlander news

The Wigamog Inn on May 7 following the fire. *Photo by Mike Baker*

Dysart council to discuss Wig future

Continued from page 1

endangered bats and the eastern hog-nosed snake, notifying Aurora Group of the need for further environmental studies before work can proceed.

The Ontario Fire Marshall's office and Haliburton Highlands OPP did not respond to questions as of press time.

Jerry Stokes, who lives on Webb Circle in the neighbouring Silver Beach subdivision, found out about the fire at around 10:30 a.m. and went to see how bad things were. He said firefighters had the road closed both ways and were still peppering the building with water.

"It's a mess… surely this is enough now. This has to be the final nail… it feels like it's going to take somebody getting hurt or killed before something is done," he said.

Stokes believes he's been working to tear down the Wigamog longer than anyone he knows. He sat on Dysart's property standards committee from the mid-2010s to early-2020s and voted in favour of the township hiring a contractor to initiate teardown in 2022.

Following that year's municipal election, Stokes believes the Wig stopped being a priority for the township. By spring 2023, Aurora Group hired their own demolition crew and started the job.

"They've managed to have this tear down delayed so many times… I find it hard to believe the township keeps accepting these setbacks and delays," Stokes said. "If Dysart moved ahead three years ago, it probably would have been done for half the price than it'll cost now."

In January, bylaw officer Hailey Cole estimated remaining demolition would cost approximately $800,000. Now, mayor Murray Fearrey fears it will be significantly more.

He said people have been accessing the property illegally for some time.

"You can go by one day and all the boards are up and then go back a week later and some of them are down. Who's doing that? That place is boarded up for good reason. In this case, it's public safety," Fearrey said. "What would have happened if someone was asleep in there when the fire started? Then this becomes a whole other story."

Fearrey told *The Highlander* council wants to take immediate action now that the structure is further damaged and will be discussing the issue later this month.

"We need to find a solution here. One where taxpayers aren't going to be liable and left to pay. There's a lot of complications for us to sort out. We have to make sure we're on solid legal ground," Fearrey said.

Stokes believes it's time for council to "get tough" and hold Aurora Group and MECP accountable.

"It's a death trap now, even more so than it was before. The risk to the public is at an all-time high," he said.

Attempts to reach Aurora Group for comment were unsuccessful.

Highlander news

People on assistance longer

By Mike Baker

Since 2020, the time some people from Haliburton County and Kawartha Lakes spend enrolled in social assistance programs, like Ontario Works, has doubled according to Janine Mitchell, the recently retired manager of human services with the City of Kawartha Lakes.

She delivered a new four-year social services service plan to the County April 23, highlighting the current demand, outlining provincial targets, and identifying some concerning trends that have emerged recently.

"Since the pandemic, there has been a drastic increase in the average number of months on assistance. Couples and couples with dependents have the highest increase with average months on assistance," Mitchell said, noting in 2017 couples with no dependents spent an average of 49 months on Ontario Works, compared to 106 months – just under nine years - in 2024.

Janine Mitchell, manager of human services at City of Kawartha Lakes, delivered a new four-year social services plan to County council in April. *Submitted.*

Couples with dependents spend an average of 7.3 years on OW, with single parents averaging 3.9 years, and single people 3.2 years. Mitchell noted over half of all OW recipients locally are under 40.

As the consolidated municipal service manager, Kawartha Lakes runs all social services on behalf of the County. She noted the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services made changes to the service planning requirements in 2024, aiming for a more structured, streamlined, and consistent model over the next four years.

As of May 6, there are 1,537 receiving some form of assistance, including 268 in the County. While managing intake for Ontario Works, the department also assists people with housing and childcare needs.

Mitchell, who retired at the end of April, being replaced by Alyson Truax, said staff has no say over who is eligible for Ontario Works, how much money people receive, and how/when the money is administered – noting that's all handled by the province.

Where the department can help, though, is in employment supports. Mitchell said staff meets regularly with those enrolled to try to improve their situation.

"We identify the barriers people may face and work with service providers as part of a team to support people to move past those barriers," she said, noting Kawartha Lakes works with five employment agencies, eight programs and services to support financial education, five harm reduction programs and service operators, and 22 programs supporting health, mental health and wellbeing.

Some of its County-based partners include SIRCH Community Services, Haliburton County Heat Bank, the John Howard Society, Five Counties Children's Centre, Kawartha Haliburton Children's Aid Society, HKPR health unit, and Community Care.

Deeper dive

Mitchell said the department's caseload has increased 12 per cent since 2022, with County files growing at a higher rate than those located in Kawartha Lakes. Of those enrolled, 69.2 per cent are single with no dependents, 23.4 per cent are single parents, 3.9 per cent are couples with children, and 3.4 per cent are couples with no children.

While the province is predicting a 16.3 per cent increase to the OW caseload in 2025, projecting total cases reaching 1,649 in Haliburton County and Kawartha Lakes, Mitchell said she doesn't think new intake will be that high.

She noted from Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, 2024 the department completed an average of 196 new applications for assistance each month. From Oct. 1 to Dec. 31, staff completed 129 applications for emergency assistance, under-18 assistance, or reactivated files.

Single people on Ontario Works receive a maximum of $733 per month, with couples eligible for up to $2,305. Mitchell said the number one complaint from people on the program was cost of housing.

"The average cost to even rent a bedroom in somebody's house is $810 a month. Single people receiving OW, they can't afford a place to live," Mitchell said, noting the average cost of a one-bedroom apartment in the region is $1,629 a month.

"Other barriers include transportation, physical and mental health needs. We're aware of all the barriers… but 96 per cent of the funding we have to support people is primarily being used to support them and their housing needs, which doesn't leave us as much room as we need to support them in other ways," she added.

Funding continues to be a challenge, Mitchell said. The social services provider received a $71,000 increase in 2025 – the first its seen in seven years. In her report, Mitchell noted full-time client services workers (CSW) should manage between 65 and 75 cases, but are currently doing between 90 and 105.

"For us to have more capacity to do the intense work that's needed, we need an additional seven CSWs in that role," Mitchell added, saying while the province said last year they would look at adjusting funding formulas for 2025, there has been no follow-up.

County council received the plan, which has been forwarded to the Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services for approval.

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Highlander news

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A MESSAGE FROM

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

MINDEN HILLS NEWS

Roadside brush collection program

The Township of Minden Hills, on May 5, ended its 36-day state of emergency following the March ice storm and ongoing high-water levels.

The township declared a state of emergency March 31, following the ice storm that caused widespread damage to power and communication networks.

Mayor Bob Carter said the current situation is "stable."

He said the township would continue its recovery phase. Clean up of tree debris on road allowances is continuing and fees for brush drop off are currently waived at the Scotch Line landfill.

The County of Haliburton announced May 5 that it, and member municipalities, are implementing a roadside brush collection program to help residents deal with storm impacts. It includes Minden Hills and designated areas of Highlands East and Dysart et al.

People can check if they're eligible at haliburtoncounty.ca/brushcollection. The program will run from May 12 to June 13. Materials must be set at the roadside by 7 a.m. on Monday of each week; and people must ensure the material is not on the road, sidewalk, or interfering with any other public or private infrastructure; only storm-related tree debris will be accepted, not bagged leaves or construction waste. Tree branches no longer than four feet long and eight inches in diameter and debris placed loosely in brown paper yard bags weighing under 55 lbs will be collected.

With the lifting, all township facilities are back to regular operations. The township also reminded residents there is no daytime burning. Residents can burn from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Residents in extreme financial hardship due to storm impacts may be able to access emergency assistance through Ontario's Social Assistance Programs. An online application form is available at ontario.ca/page/apply-emergency-assistance.

Blue box recycling update

Council, at its April 24 meeting, directed staff to award the contract to collect, haul, and process non-eligible blue box material to Waste Connections of Canada.

Manager of waste facilities, Chelsea Cosh, explained that commercial and institutional blue box recycling material is not covered under the provincial program. For example, if you put a pop bottle in your household blue box, it's accepted. But if you put it in the blue box at work, it is not.

Along with Dysart et al, Minden Hills explored having a contractor handle the non-eligible material for them. The other option would have been to not collect it all, with businesses and institutions having to make private arrangements.

The contract is for five years, with extension options, and starting Jan. 1, 2026. It will be for the Scotch Line landfill only.

Cosh also recommended a "reasonable waste disposal fee" for "partial cost recovery" and to not "solely fall on the property tax base." However, council did not make a decision, deferring that part of the discussion to 2026 budget talks.

Coun. Tammy McKelvey said, "I personally don't want to start charging commercial businesses for this material. They pay a higher tax rate…" She was also concerned some outlying businesses would not be happy about having to take their recyclables to Scotch Line. She also voiced displeasure that local haulers were not provided an opportunity to bid.

Residents help with tree clean up in the aftermath of the ice storm. *File.*

Cosh estimated non-eligible sources would account for 3.52 per cent of blue box metric tonnes. She added there is no information available to know which non-eligible sources currently use the township's blue box recycling services. She said it could range from 50 to 100 metric tonnes and require 21-42 trips to Bracebridge with containers and fibres. She could only estimate total costs.

Coun. Pam Sayne said Ontario councils were excited when the blue box program was first announced, however, they are now trying to figure out how to deal with the non-eligible materials.

"So, I see this as a provincial issue. It's an unexpected management system that we have, added expenses to us again, and I think this is a good reason also to continue putting this onto the provincial agenda and saying 'your system is costing us more. The blue box program is not what we anticipated and how it was explained originally at many of our committee meetings and conferences years ago'."

(Minden Hills news compiled by Lisa Gervais)

Minden Hills to continue with paper ballots

By Lisa Gervais

Minden Hills voters will be able to cast their municipal ballots in 2026 by internet, telephone, or in-person paper voting.

Council chose the three methods, despite clerk Vicki Bull asking them to join the rest of the County in going with internet and telephone voting only.

Bull argued consistency would save money on things such as shared advertising, lessen voter confusion, and hopefully increase voter turnout. She added the electronic methods ensure accessibility.

"The voters are able to vote from anywhere, anytime, from the comfort of their own home and using their own devices that they are familiar with …" she said.

It would have been a move away from traditional Minden Hills voting methods, however Bull said there would still be in-person voting stations set up, with the only difference being that people would push a button rather than physically mark an 'X' on a spot. She added staff, and potentially, volunteers would be on hand to assist. She said that included places such as Hyland Crest long-term care home. "I think it is manageable. I think it is something we can progress towards."

The next vote is Oct. 26, 2026 and the township will have $72,000 in its coffers by that time.

Deputy mayor Lisa Schell began the discussion by saying she liked the idea of internet and telephone voting only, particularly to ensure seasonal residents can participate.

However, Coun. Shirley Johannessen disagreed. Concerned with low voter turnout at the 2022 election, she felt more options was the way to go. She said seniors don't appreciate change, and since they make up a large percentage of voters, "all options should be available."

Coun. Tammy McKelvey concurred saying, "I cannot support changing from what we did last [election]. People in the community still want a paper ballot."

Bull said in-person paper ballots would require tabulators and add $3,000 to $5,000 to the election bill. She argued electronic voting has been successful in Dysart et al. Bull said people in the 45-66 age demographic have been able to easily use internet and phone voting. "I really do think we can move forward. It cuts down barriers and human errors with manual methods."

But Coun. Bob Sisson sided with Johannessen and McKelvey. "What happens if I push the wrong button by mistake?" he asked Bull. She said there is a confirmation button built in to avoid errors.

Mayor Bob Carter said if spending $3,000 to $5,000 "would give better reassurance to everybody, and really reflect our community, I would be willing to go with that."

Coun. Ivan Ingram also lobbied for all available voting methods.

Coun. Pam Sayne said there were pros and cons to all methods.

Sayne, who sits on the board of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), added the Association of Municipalities of Ontario would be in Minden May 28 to discuss highlights of its Healthy Democray Project. She said the event is being offered in collaboration with Aging Together as Community.

"Which is to encourage people running; it's to encourage people to vote; it's encouraging people to get engaged with our community. I think this is going to be a very important activity."

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Highlander news

ALGONQUIN HIGHLANDS NEWS

Algonquin Highlands is hosting its annual Spring Fly-In at Stanhope Municipal Aiport May 24, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cemetery clean-up

Algonquin Highlands is reminding the public not to leave breakables and other items, such as artificial flowers, at gravesites across the township's cemeteries.

Deputy clerk Sarah Hutson told council during a May 1 meeting that staff are beginning clean-up efforts at Maple Lake, Zion, St. Stephen's and St. Peter's cemeteries, noting some of the sites are in rough shape following a long winter.

While most of the work involves routine ground maintenance, turf repair, leaf and litter removal, and levelling/re-seeding of grave sites, Hutson said crews will also need to clean up items left at gravesites over the past few months.

"There has been a noticeable increase in the number of plant hangers and glass items placed at gravesites. These items significantly complicate maintenance efforts and pose safety risks to visitors.

"Many of these items are not permitted under [the township's cemetery bylaw]. With the unpredictable weather we've experienced in recent years, items such as glass trinkets, ornaments, and artificial flowers are often damaged or scattered around the grounds," Hutson said.

Mindful of the meaning some of these items likely carry, Hutson said staff is proposing installing collection spots at each cemetery to serve as a lost and found. She said people will have until the end of the summer season to retrieve items still in reasonable condition.

Mayor Liz Danielsen said while she can understand people placing sentimental items beside loved ones, she had no time for things like cigars and bottles of alcohol being left behind.

Hutson said staff will start advertising in the spring and fall to let families know they should pickup any items they don't want thrown away.

"We certainly don't want to discard those items because they have significant value to the families, but we want to make sure… they're not left broken across the cemeteries," Hutson said.

Road resurfacing

Council awarded a $625,000 contract for road surface treatments to Miller Paving Ltd. at last week's meeting.

Public works manager Adam Thorn said Algonquin Highlands participated in a joint tender with the County and Minden Hills, and although the project came in $85,000 over budget, he recommended proceeding. He said the shortfall would be covered by year-end surplus, if there is one, or reserves.

Danielsen felt it was important to move ahead, saying the work needs to be done and isn't likely to be cheaper next year.

Roads slated for single-surface treatment with a fog seal applied this year include Braeloch Road, Barry Line Road, Green Lake Road, and approximately 3,500 sq. metres of Harvey Avenue East. Roads up for pulverization and double-surface treatment include a portion of Harvey Avenue East and North Shore Road from Stanhope Airport Road to Generation Trail.

Lights out?

The township has taken the first steps towards potentially implementing a dedicated dark sky policy, with staff and council working on a survey it plans to release seeking public input.

The issue has been discussed many times over the past few years, with deputy mayor Jennifer Dailloux saying recently, "more interest has come from members of the public on dark skies."

She said the environmental and stewardship committee has done some research on policies that exist elsewhere, feeling there's potential for implementing something beneficial in Algonquin Highlands. CAO Angie Bird suggested taking the issue to the public via a survey, which council liked.

"We'll see what we hear and go from there," Danielsen said. While no timeline was discussed, the survey is expected to be released online later this year.

Fly-in

Stanhope Municipal Airport is the place to be May 24, with Algonquin Highlands hostings its annual Spring Fly-In.

The event will feature an array of aircraft, classic cars, artists, vendors, food, live music, and a beer tent by Haliburton Highlands Brewing. There will be firefighters and equipment from Algonquin Highlands Fire Services and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. For a fee, people can even take to the skies for private plane and helicopter rides.

Visiting pilots are welcome to sleep under the stars at the airport, though must pre-register at kfrancis-carroll@algonquinhighlands.ca.

Danielsen said the past few airport events have drawn big numbers.

"You don't have to be an aviation enthusiast to enjoy these wonderful events. They are truly celebrations that seems to grow in size all the time. If you've never been to a fly-in before, I encourage you to check it out," she said.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

(Algonquin Highlands briefs compiled by Mike Baker).

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Highlander news

Pamela Marsales, of Friends of the Rail Trail (FoRT), is exciting about a new six-month cycling pilot coming to Haliburton this summer. *Photo by Heather Kennedy.* Inset: Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey, MPP Laurie Scott, and community supporters hold a ribbon cutting at the new Caboose Community Bike Hub April 24. *Submitted.*

Caboose to be cycle hub

By Mike Baker

County resident Pamela Marsales has been an avid cycler for most of her life. Now, she plans to spend the next few months passing that love on to the Highlands community via programming at the new Caboose Community Bike Hub.

Located in Head Lake Park, the space was unveiled April 24 by Marsales, MPP Laurie Scott, and Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey. The project was pitched by Friends of the Rail Trail (FoRT), supported by Dysart, and funded by a $30,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant.

Marsales has been leading the charge since March 2024, feeling the need for a recognized cycling hub in Haliburton County. She said free programs will likely launch this month "as soon as the weather is good enough." Funding is in place until Sept. 30.

"It's all about encouraging more people to get on a bicycle, and feel comfortable doing so," Marsales said. "There will be programs for novice cyclists, which could be very young children who are ready for their first experience on a bike, to older kids who grew up not knowing how to ride and just need a gentle push to get going.

"We want to do something that's fun, that doesn't feel overly instructional. It's about gaining confidence and developing an awareness of safety techniques," she added.

She envisioned the caboose being open several days a week through summer – "definitely Tuesdays", Marsales said, when Head Lake Park hosts the Haliburton County farmers market and Rotary's Music in the Park concerts. It'll also be open on weekends.

Not just for children, Marsales said some programs will also be open for adult participation. She recalled how, upon moving to the area from Toronto, she stopped cycling for a while after a few white-knuckle rides on County roads.

"It was the hills and the logging truck traffic – there was a nervousness about where and when it was safe for me to cycle," Marsales said, noting it took her time to figure out best routes and riding practises. "I'm sure there are many people here who would like to cycle, but don't. We want to find ways to bring those lapsed cyclists back."

A program manager has been hired, with additional funds to be used for equipment, ranging from portable bike repair stands, to pylons, to children's bike helmets. Marsales said FoRT is now looking for volunteers to assist with program delivery.

Scott said this was exactly the type of project OTF likes to support.

"The Caboose Community Bike Hub is bringing new energy to active living in Haliburton by creating accessible, inclusive cycling opportunities for people of all ages and abilities," the MPP said.

Convinced the pilot will be a success, Marsales said FoRT is already preparing to apply for another round of funding, this time for two years' worth of programming through an OTF Grow grant. She said that will allow for a more detailed expansion of the hub.

"Riding a bike can bring joy, freedom and mobility. Sometimes all that's needed for people to experience those feelings is getting over fear, so that's one of the main things we'd like to achieve this summer," Marsales said. "Hopefully people participate, tell us what they like and what they don't, then we can use that to shape the next phase."

Haliburton Legion president Mike Waller said 400 people signed a petition calling for Dysart et al to install a crosswalk on Mountain Street. *Photo by Mike Baker.*

Push for Legion crosswalk

By Mike Baker

Haliburton Legion president Mike Waller says he'll be submitting a request to the Ministry of Transportation to install a crosswalk in front of the Mountain Street facility this month.

At an April 22 meeting, Waller told Dysart et al council he feels people need assistance crossing the busy highway, saying he's seen many near-misses between pedestrians and vehicles recently .

He noted close to 500 people have signed a petition, wanting to see a crosswalk installed by the legion.

"It's like the old frogger game seeing people trying to cross. We had lots of people out wanting to cross the road so they could vote in the advanced polls [for the federal election], but they couldn't. It was a bit of a drastic situation," Waller said.

Mayor Murray Fearrey said the township tried to get a crosswalk installed by the Gardens of Haliburton on the other side of Hwy. 118 going out of town towards Carnarvon a couple of years ago but were turned down. Public works director Rob Camelon told council there's a "low probability" of obtaining MTO approval for a crosswalk by the legion.

"Staff recommend against consideration of a crosswalk [at the legion] due to likely deficient sight lines along Mountain Street looking eastward, and the proximity of emergency vehicles passing through the area," Camelon said.

He suggested that, before considering any request, the township conduct a traffic study of the site, costing $6,500. Camelon said deferring the work to 2026 would likely increase the cost to $10,000. If approved by MTO, he estimated the crosswalk would cost $80,000 to $100,000 to install.

Coun. Pat Casey said he'd be in favour of getting a study done in front of the Legion, and on Highland Street in front of Hook, Line and Sinker, which Camelon estimated would cost $13,000.

"If town is evolving, we've got to find ways to get people across the road… somebody is going to get killed or hit by a car. I loathe the day when we have to deal with that as a council," Casey said.

Coun. Barry Boice said Mountain Street is a major concern for him, noting he routinely sees people lining up and waiting to cross the street – most of them seniors.

"I don't know what we can do, but we've got to do something," Boice said.

Camelon said a study was done near Hook, Line and Sinker about 10 years ago, but a crosswalk wasn't recommended. He told council that having something like a transportation master plan, which could address requests like this, would be helpful. He noted if council were to approve one request, they may receive others.

Council opted to fund the two studies, with the money to be drawn from reserves. The township also agreed to write a letter of support to MTO.

Other asks

Waller also complained about drivers leaving their vehicles in no-park zones along Mountain Street, often blocking the driveway into the Legion property and an accessible spot in front of the building.

The Legion president asked council to paint new lines on the road, making it clear drivers are to avoid parking in the two spots.

He also tested council's financial resolve, requesting funding for a commercial generator. He said the building was without power for several days following the March 29 ice storm, meaning it remained closed despite being designated as an emergency shelter.

"We were unable to provide assistance to people who needed it," Waller said, noting he's applied for three different grants to pay for a machine, but all have been turned down.

CAO Tamara Wilbee suggested renting a generator would be cheaper than buying one. While Waller didn't provide a cost, getting one big enough to service the Legion would be well into five figures, whereas renting would be about $4,500 per week. Council did not provide any funds for the generator.

MY Haliburton HIGHLANDS

What's Happening in your county...

May 10 Farmers Market returns to Minden

May 10 Open Stage - Feat Stacey Ruppert - Live Entertainment - Hosted at Haliburton Legion

May 10 Art Heist Mystery Night - Fundraiser - Hosted at Haliburton School of Art + Design

May 11 Briar Summers - Live entertainment - Hosted at Hook, Line & Sinker

May 11 Kattam and his Tam Tams - Razzamataz - Hosted at Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion

May 13 Farmers Market returns to Haliburton

May 13 Community Coffee House - Speaker Series - Hosted at Haliburton Legion

May 14 2 Wheel & 3 Ply Tourism - Speaker Series - Hosted at Haliburton Fish Hatchery

May 15 Cold Journey - Documentary Screening - Hosted at Minden Hills Cultural Centre

May 15 Erin Blackstock - Live entertainment - Hosted at Boshkung Social

To see the full listings of events, visit

myhaliburtonhighlands.com/whats-happening

Editorial opinion

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Disconnect and recharge

By Lisa Gervais

I'm just back from two weeks holidays, admittedly jet lagged, and not completely back into work mode.

I blame Spain. I've spent the past fortnight in a country where the typical working day tends to be from around 8:30 or 9 a.m. to around 1:30 p.m. and then from 4:30 or 5 p.m. to around 8 p.m. Mind you, it seemed people worked far less in the places I visited. The largest was Santiago de Compostela, at a population of about 100,000 people. Most of the other places were much smaller.

I'd say the famous siesta, whilst declining in the larger cities, is still a major part of the working day in Spain.

Not that I was having siestas. Oh no, far from it.

I was on the Camino de Santiago, also known as the Way of St. James, a pilgrimage route. It is a network of routes that lead to Santiago de Compostela in northwest Spain, where the tomb of the apostle St. James is said to be located.

Two years ago, I walked from Vigo, Spain to Santiago de Compostela, a distance of a little over 100 kms in five days. This time around, I walked from Santiago de Compostela to Muxia, on the coast, about 120 kms in seven days.

Friends and family often question my choice of 'holidays' – asking why in the world I would want to put my body through something like that on a break from work.

There are many reasons, as other Highlanders who have walked a section of the Camino, know. For me, it is a good way to stay fit over the winter months leading up to my spring walks. This winter was hard for training, mind you. Too much time on the treadmill and not enough time on the road. Nevertheless, it was exercise.

In our fast-paced world, and amidst the chaos of U.S. president Donald Trump and his administration, plopping myself down on a path in Spain in the middle of nowhere was a Godsend. I disconnected completely from world and Canadian news. The only times I tuned in were the day after the Canadian election … and the morning after every Toronto Maple Leafs playoff game against the Ottawa Senators. Who takes holidays during the first round of the NHL playoffs?

I suppose the other reason I put myself through this is to slow down. There is something extremely satisfying about the pace of one step at a time, one breath at a time. In this world we live in, everyone has to take the time to disconnect, and recharge.

And, that doesn't necessarily mean getting on a plane, going to another continent to walk 20 kms a day for a week. It's about finding those pockets of peace in your everyday life. Whether it's coffee on the dock at 7 a.m., a walk at lunch time, or a sundowner after a long day – we all need to self nurture. It is only then that we can come back rested and raring to go. Well, at least after siesta.

Land of lakes

By Mike Baker

In your mind, what's the one thing that makes Haliburton County special?

While answers will differ from person to person, I'd wager a good number highlight nature, landscape, or the environment. And why not? The Highlands region has been branded as the 'Land of a Thousand Lakes' for a reason. Despite the fact there's actually closer to 600 waterbodies within the County, that's one of the things, perhaps *the* thing, that our area is known for.

I caught up with Robert Pye, executive director of Watersheds Canada, on Monday. He was riding a bit of a high following the success of the non-profit's first-ever national conference – held here in Haliburton May 1 and 2.

More than 100 visitors swarmed to Pinestone Resort for the conference, some from as far away as British Columbia, Manitoba, Atlantic Canada, and the U.S. Panelists and presenters came in from across the continent – a who's who of the scientific and watershed communities.

Mark Cullen, a nationally renowned author and gardener who writes weekly for the *Toronto Star* and 31 other newspapers across Canada, was one of the premiere keynote speakers. Rather than regurgitate his tips and tricks of the trade, Cullen focused on his theory that plants, and nature in general, have a way of communicating with us – we just need to open our minds and listen. Really listen.

Take a moment. Stop what you're doing. If you're home, and live rurally, go outside into your yard. Allow yourself to get lost in the sounds, the buzz of nature. Live in one of our villages? That's OK. Whether it's Minden, Haliburton, Wilberforce, Cardiff, Dorset, or anywhere in between – a nice park, trail, or lake is never far away.

If you've grown up here, it might be easy to overlook how fortunate we are. Pye said it himself, Haliburton County is one of the country's last remaining natural paradises.

The conference was more than two years in the making, with planning dating back to 2022. While the itinerary changed plenty, one thing remained consistent – Pye was adamant this event would be taking place in the Highlands.

He said our community embodies everything Watersheds Canada is about – respect for and preservation of nature.

The non-profit does have a history with the community. Its Love Your Lakes program got its start here 12 years ago, with the help of Paul MacInnes and the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations (CHA).

Through the initiative, 52,252 properties on 229 lakes have been assessed using a standardized protocol that generates reports on the state of people's shoreline and recommended actions for improving lake health for people and wildlife.

Framework from that was used as the foundation for the County's shoreline preservation bylaw – another of our shining lights, Pye says.

With specialists in fish ecology, citizen science, bug makeup, shoreline restoration, birdwatching, and plants together in the same space, the conference focused more on getting outside and 'doing', rather than sitting inside and 'talking'.

That's a key distinction, Pye noted. To truly make a difference, and understand the benefits of the work you're doing, you need to get your hands a little dirty.

Pye could have decided to take this event anywhere – that he centred on Haliburton says a lot about our community. And the way others see us.

He said he hopes to bring the conference back to the County one day – perhaps this could be the start of a fruitful symbiotic relationship, where Watersheds Canada gets the benefit of being able to work in, and show off, one of the country's best natural landscapes, and we get a ton of exposure.

Some first-time visitors have already made plans to return, while the promise of new partnerships, like the one established between Watersheds Canada and U-Links Centre for Community Based Research, is exciting.

The benefits of this conference are likely to be felt for years to come.

Editorial opinion

LETTERS

Take accountability

Dear editor,

Re: Nell Thomas' response to social media comments that emerged during the federal election campaign. It has become a political tactic to blame "foreign interference, the extreme-right propaganda machine of disinformation," rather than take responsibility for and be accountable for what they say and do.

I hope that the Carney Liberal government will stand accountable to the public for their political policies that affect all of us and that they do a much better job than the Liberals under Trudeau.

This also goes for the Poilievre Conservatives as the main opposition party.

Our country's future depends on it.

Darlene Buckingham
Wilberforce

A rebuttal

Dear editor,

Dear Dave Love, may you or someone you love never suffer a long or distressing end of life journey.

I wish for you the same opportunities for a death journey with dignity that everyone hopes for. I wish the planet could be the Goldilocks environment for your children and grandchildren that we have enjoyed. Sadly, that is not reality.

Dear Mike Baker. Why fan the flames of self-righteousness, and hypocrisy? Words out of context are misleading and harmful. Let's promote kindness and generosity of spirit.

Dear Jamie Schmale. I appreciate your public condemnation of property damage for campaign signs damaged and stolen. The public must understand this is illegal activity, chargeable offenses of theft and damage to public property. There was an abundance of activity that deserves public acknowledgment and consequence. Who stole Liberal signs, placed them in front of business advertisements, took photos and posted this as efforts to blame our campaign? This deserves public condemnation. It is a slippery slope.

Your message to the community in last week's *Highlander* suggests a lot of doom and gloom. This was not our experience when we knocked on doors. No, Canada is not broken, despite Pierre Poilievre's desire to paint that picture.

When we campaigned, we heard much hope and enthusiasm for a strong, united and vibrant country. Under a Prime Minister Carney government, we have the ingredients for precisely that country.

The rest of the world is singing Canada's praises for choosing this prime minister. Let's do the same. For the love of Canada, let's choose kindness and respect.

Nell Thomas
Minden

Disappointed

Dear editor,

I was disappointed to see Dave Love's letter in the May 1 Highlander. Dr. Thomas was accessible during the election campaign, and a short phone call would have given him the information that the material he was quoting was out of context and unfair. You did know because you published Mike Baker's article on page 7.

Journalism has been a respected profession.

I'm disappointed and sad.

John Irwin
Algonquin Highlands

Take action now

Dear editor,

Wait and see – the pitiful cry to action, or lack thereof by our mayor and council in Dysart et al. The Koshlong Lake Road bridge now costing twice as much to repair/replace as last year? Let's wait and see.

The purchase of municipal vehicles from the U.S. – why – and the impact of tariffs? Let's wait and see. To the Wigamog fiasco, procrastination at its finest. Due to the less than successful recent fire at the Wigamog lodge, the residents and taxpayers now have to contend with a totally destroyed sand beach and possibly unknown toxic pollutants entering Lake Kashagawigamog. Then there's the partially burned-out skeleton of the derelict lodge glaring down on the water.

How many more let's wait and sees will there be during the reign of the current mayor and council? Sewage plant? Road maintenance? Home building?

It would be a breath of fresh air if the mayor and council would be more proactive instead of reactive. Every time the 'let's wait and see' is invoked, it costs the citizens of Dysart more money. Nero fiddles, while Rome burns.

Jack Sinclair
Haliburton

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

A close-up of a sprouting ostrich fern, captured by Randy Barber.

Thank you

Dear editor,

We would like to publicly thank Hydro One employees, Parks Canada, municipal councillors and staff, and all the volunteers who assisted the community during the most recent emergency.

Kathy and Fraser Rogers
Minden

5G complaints absurd

Dear editor,

Rick Arnold recently wrote a letter to *The Highlander* expressing concerns over the installation of a new 5G cell tower on the Burleigh road. Following his opinion piece, the Grace Lake Association sent out a similar message advocating for people to contact municipal councillors, including links to Mr. Arnold for a basic template against the tower.

These letters do not represent all residents in our area. They attempt to combine an embarrassing form of NIMBYism with perceived "risks" of cellular radiation. Trumped up arguments provide cover for cottage owners who don't want to change the view from their dock.

Studies on 5G technology began in 2015 and in short order it was widely installed across the U.S. and Europe. None of these countries have cited massive increases in cancer or wildlife death. It has been tested and cleared by Canadian authorities. Arguments about radiation risks are completely absurd.

The fact of the matter is that one more cell tower will make a big difference to local residents, while having little impact on cottager owners.

When politicians speak about communities that have been left behind, they are speaking about Haliburton County. It has become a safety issue. It impacts our kids who need to access assignments online. It impacts our economy. We should be thankful that government initiatives are bringing it to the area.

While the Grace Lake Association noted that they don't represent the views of all members, their letter was embarrassingly one-sided. My concern is that "lake associations" are becoming a maven for cottage owners who want to dictate regulations at the expense of the local community.

It will be a massive mistake if council votes against this tower. I'd ask you to send me a text with your feelings on this issue, but I don't have cell service.

Kevin Clark
Grace Lake

SEND IN YOUR PHOTO OF THE WEEK
SEND US YOUR OPINION!

Send them to editor@thehighlander.ca

Highlander business

Brock Williamson at the Lounge in Minden Hills. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Lounge owner's happy place is a coffee shop

By Lisa Gervais

Brock Williamson grew up in Shoal Lake, Manitoba – population 700 – so he knows a thing or two about small towns.

His dad owns the IGA store there, so he has more than an inkling of what it is like to run a business in a hamlet. And, he worked in a restaurant in high school.

"I've always had an understanding and appreciation for small towns," the new owner of Lounge in Minden – where the 50's Diner used to be – says.

The business staged a soft opening May 4 and is now open, although still a work in progress.

The Lounge features a coffee and pastry bar, as well as breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Williamson and his crew have been working around the clock to clean and renovate the space and get it ready for customers.

"I just want to create an environment where people can come and feel comfortable," Williamson said. That is important to him, ever since moving to British Columbia to go to college.

After working out in the morning, then going to school, he'd head to a coffee shop. "It was my place to study. I would sit down with my laptop and do my notes and have a coffee and it was a good morning for me.

"I found that my happy place was being in a coffee shop. I've always wanted to own a coffee shop. I have no idea what I'm doing, but I'm learning," he says with a wry smile.

The kitchen is up and running. The coffee and pastry area are complete. The bathrooms are renovated. The sitting area is painted and the floors done. Some temporary furniture is in, with pieces held up at the U.S. border due to tariffs. There is artwork up that will be for sale. It is a huge transformation from the 50's-style diner that used to exist in the space.

"We're putting a lot of money into this restaurant to make it look nice," Williamson said. Behind the scenes, it's also been about ensuring the restaurant is clean and up to code.

"We've been working nonstop from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day."

The restaurateur said this past Sunday's soft opening was "a huge success" but also part of the learning curve. He said they were not prepared for the volume of business and are looking to add staff.

A woman walks by the outdoor patio where Williamson is sitting and tells him, "I'm getting another cappuccino."

Williamson said, "people have been very inquisitive for sure and very impressed with what we've done. I'm very proud of what we've done here. The staff have been great."

As for what is on offer, he describes it as a "modern café bistro, or artisan café bistro. Offering a moder atmosphere with chill vibes and a focus on beautiful plates and local artist artworks on the walls."

You can follow them on Instagram – lounge_espresso-bar; Lounge Café on Facebook. They are located at 12311 Hwy. 35, Minden.

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COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- May 8 – Regular Council Meeting
- May 13 – Special Council Meeting
- May 29 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

STATE OF EMERGENCY ENDED

As recommended by the Community Emergency Management Coordinator, Fire Chief Don Kruger and the Emergency Operations Commander, CAO Cynthia Fletcher, the Township of Minden Hills has officially terminated the state of emergency effective May 5, 2025. Please visit our website for further information.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

Take Notice there will be a Special Meeting of Council held Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 9:00 AM in the Minden Hills Council Chambers, located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, ON. The purpose of the Special meeting is to provide an additional Council meeting that is dedicated to a series of applications for the Planning Department. The Special meeting will consist of:

7 Public Meetings as follows:
- PLZBA2025004 – Wilson
- PLZBA2025009 – 2640599 Ontario Inc
- PLZBA2025012 – Binnendyk
- PLZBA2025014 – Haynes and Thistle
- PLZBA2025015 – Calvieri
- PLZBA2025022 – Barry
- PLZBA2025025 – Howell

1 Presentation (Eastern Ontario Regional Network – Communication Towers)
9 Shoreline Road Allowance Application Reports
1 Mapping Updates Report

Please visit our website for further information.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We are currently recruiting for the following vacancies:

- Permanent Part-Time Waste Facilities Operator
- Casual Waste Disposal Site Attendants

Visit www.mindenhills.ca/careers for more information and how to apply.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The second installment for Interim tax bills is due May 23, 2025. Property Owners are responsible to provide the Municipal

Office (7 Milne St, Minden) with written notification of any address change. As per the Ontario Municipal Act, 2001, failure to receive your tax bill does not exempt penalty charges from being applied to tax account. Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

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Highlander mother's day

Beth Brundage with her son Jace. *Photo by Susan Tromanhauser.*

Motherhood her way

By Susan Tromanhauser

Beth Brundage has a very specific Mothers' Day celebration in mind - dinner out with the family.

But this isn't Brundage's first Mothers' Day, so she has tempered her expectations to be a celebration of "peaceful chaos," incorporating making car ramps out of menus to keep her four-year-old son, Thatcher, busy while tending to the needs of newborn son, Jace. Her Mothers' Day will also be divided between the boys' two grandmothers, ensuring they receive their kudos for the support they provide.

Brundage's recollection of her first Mothers' Day in 2021 is very hazy, saying now she, "is different; the boys are different." Her first Mothers' Day, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, felt isolated and emotional. She suffered from post-partum depression, afraid to leave her baby with anyone else and yet afraid to take him to the grocery store in case he cried and caused a scene.

Her mother was a big support, as was her medical team of Haliburton & Bancroft Midwives and her family physician. They all supported her, ensuring she received proper treatment through medication and therapy. Brundage explains treatment helped her recover to a point, but it was once she was able to return to the gym and start exercising, she really felt some relief.

This time, maternity leave is quite different than her first leave with Thatcher. With her firstborn she took time away from her position as an education assistant at an elementary school. With newborn Jace, she has yet to take time off - from her family responsibilities or her job. As a result, Jace is already well-traveled. At two days old, he attended Thatcher's skating lesson and he accompanies his mom while she takes his big brother to speech therapy in Bracebridge.

Now office manager of the family business, The Dock Shop, there is no time for a maternity leave. She is busy keeping the staff of five, plus her husband, in line while the young mother juggles all things customer relations. She did forewarn customers she might not return calls as quickly as before, and that emails might arrive at all hours of the night. Brundage credits the flexibility of her job as being the primary reason she is able to fit everything into her day.

While she is doing a busy job of tending to a newborn, Brundage manages to connect with the outside world by going to Castle Antiques in Haliburton. There she "can just sit and people watch" or set up her laptop and work, and connect to other people. Brundage ignores advice to sleep while the baby sleeps, saying nothing would get done if she did that, but admits she sometimes uses naptimes to binge Netflix.

Watching Brundage comfortably cuddle her month-old baby Jace, it is easy to see she loves her role as mom. In a comfy café chair, she embraces her newborn, peacefully asleep in her arms. She also sips her afternoon coffee treat, acknowledging sleep can be difficult and caffeine helps.

At the café, she is able to hold an adult conversation with the only interruption a greeting from a friendly face entering the café. Brundage smiles and says now that she lives in Haliburton "she can't go anywhere without knowing someone" and admits enjoying the smaller town to the city of Peterborough, where she grew up, which to her "seems too busy now."

Brundage truly believes in the adage "it takes a village to raise a child" and is appreciative of all the support she receives in her community.

Advice for other mothers? Brundage is adamant the most important thing she has learned as a mother is the necessity to take time for yourself. "If a mother doesn't take care of herself, she can't take care of others," she said.

She added feeling as if she is a different person now than before and every child is different. She admits there was a huge learning curve with her first child but this time she is more relaxed, more confident. And, as if on cue to prove her point, Jace stirs and immediately Brundage knows, "he's hungry, it's time for him to eat."

But she is also quick to point out, as is the case with all mothers, "I'm still learning."

Say Happy Mother's Day with a gift card from

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Highlander community

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HALIBURTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION (HCHC)

Board of Directors Opportunities

HCHC is currently seeking an individual to serve as a Director on the Corporation's Board.

If you are a community minded individual and believe in the value of affordable housing, please consider submitting a resume to join our caring compliment. The initial commitment will be for the balance of the term ending June 22, 2026. The average commitment is approximately 3-5 hours per month depending on your personal level of involvement. HCHC is particularly interested in hearing from people with knowledge experience and/or interest in any of the following areas:

- Operations/Maintenance
- Finance
- Legal
- Construction
- Affordable Housing
- Participating in a Community Board

If you would like to consider applying for this volunteer position we would like to hear from you by June 14, 2025. Please send an email to president@haliburtonhousing.com

THE MAP IS BACK!!!

Call now to book your spot in the 2025 Map!

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heather@thehighlander.ca

Another win

Haliburton County's ACM Designs were big winners at the Peterborough and Kawarthas Home Builders Association's annual awards gala April 24. The firm took home 11 out of 12 awards they were nominated for, including the prestigious Renovator of the Year title. ACM Designs, owned by Andria Cowan-Molyneaux, became the first women-led firm to win this award at the PKHBA gala. *(Mike Baker).*

Above: ACM Designs owner Andria Cowan-Molyneaux, left, accepts the Renovator of the Year award from Kylee McGrath at the PKHBA awards gala April 24 in Peterborough. *Submitted.*

Shooting his shot

Andrew Anderson, of Pefferlaw, ON, had the golden ticket at the Haliburton Highlands Outdoor Association's wild game dinner at the Haliburton Legion April 11, winning a new Henry .308 long ranger hunting rifle valued at $1,900. The gun was bought at cost from Outdoors Plus and donated by the Muir family. This year's wild game dinner raised $19,000, with HHOA lead Dan Smith saying "it was a sellout, everyone had a great time and enjoyed a great dinner of many wild game and domestic dishes." *(Mike Baker).*

Right: Andrew Anderson, centre, shows off the Henry .308 long range hunting rifle he won as the door prize at HHOA's wild game dinner April 11. Also pictured is Colt Taylor from Outdoors Plus, left, and HHOA president Dan Smith, right. *Submitted.*

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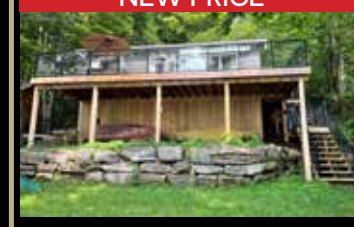

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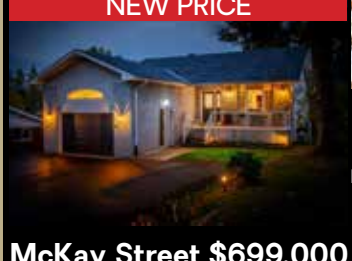

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Highlander environment

Top left: Author and gardener Mark Cullen was one of the keynote speakers at Watersheds Canada's national conference in Haliburton May 1 and 2. Top right: Watersheds Canada executive director Rob Pye said Haliburton County was the perfect location for the organization's inaugural national conference. Bottom left: Conference attendees participating in a native planting workshop around the pond on the Pinestone Resort property. Bottom middle: The birdwatching demonstrations were also popular. Bottom right: Lawyer Mark Mattson got people talking about their favourite waterbody and why it means so much to them. *Photos courtesy of Monica Seidel.*

National conference 'puts Haliburton on the map'

By Mike Baker

Robert Pye, executive director of Watersheds Canada, said last week's inaugural national conference held at Pinestone Resort in Haliburton was "a bit of a homecoming" for the non-profit.

The event was a sellout, with 116 scientists, environmentalists, and water enthusiasts from across the continent descending upon Haliburton County May 1 and 2 for speeches, workshops, and live demonstrations from more than a dozen partnering presenters.

"We're a conservation organization that works at the community level, and our mandate is all about shoreline protection, water quality, fish habitat, education and outreach on the importance of freshwater," Pye said.

"The organization is approaching its 24th birthday and we'd never had our own event… we wanted to change that. Haliburton was deliberately picked as the host community, because we have a lot of history in these Highlands," he added.

Twelve years ago, Haliburton County was chosen as the guinea pig for a new 'Love Your Lakes' initiative launched by Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation. Working alongside Paul MacInnes and the Coalition of Haliburton County Property Owners' Association, Pye said the non-profit delivered the program on around 50 lakes in the County.

In the years since, Love Your Lakes has assessed more than 50,000 individual properties on over 300 Canadian lakes, Pye said, including in Alberta, Ontario and on the east coast. The evaluation program is designed to encourage lakefront property owners to take proactive steps to improve lake health by maintaining healthier shorelines.

Pye spoke of his personal connections – recalling an elementary school trip to the Leslie Frost Centre in the 80s, where he met Barrie Martin and Barb Elliot, one of the instructors at the site. Elliot was drafted in for last week's conference, where she ran a 'Bugs with Barb' workshop inviting people to collect water samples and analyze them under a microscope.

There were five other outdoor activities – Watersheds Canada staff discussed the benefits of native plants for shoreline protection, leading live planting on the Pinestone property; Water Rangers showcased enhancements in water quality testing; attendees were taught how to make brush bundles, which can serve as habitat for small fish species like bass and pike; while Birds Canada taught people how to utilize modern bird identification tools.

"This conference was unique because it wasn't just people sitting in a room listening to someone talking on stage. We took people outside, there was strong audience participation… people got a chance to see nature in action in Haliburton," Pye said.

Keynote speeches were delivered, on Friday, from Mark Cullen, an expert gardener, author, broadcaster and tree advocate, and on Saturday from Mark Mattson, president of Swim Drink Fish and Lake Ontario's Waterkeeper.

"We brought in the best of the best… Mattson is one of Canada's leading environmental lawyers. He was so inspiring about his message on how looking after our waters has to be a community effort. He got personal with everybody, asking what waterbody changed their life," he said.

Cullen's presentation didn't focus on gardening tips or techniques, instead delving into his theory that plants have a way of speaking and listening to us. "He talked about going from a self-described tree-hugger to a tree activist. How plant and tree life are living organisms, and we need to respect their place in our world."

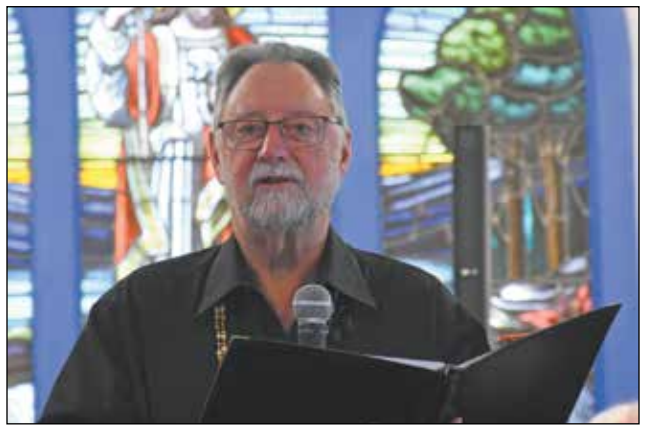
Pye said he made tons of new connections at the conference, including with U-Links Centre for Community Based Research, based in Haliburton County.

"We've had some discussions about how Watersheds Canada can support their work… our specialty is shoreline restoration, habitat creation – if that physical work can connect with the research, studies, and assessments, then I think we could be great partners."

With this conference taking two-and-a-half years to put together, Pye said he isn't sure if or when another will take place. But he hopes to bring the event back to the Highlands someday.

"I think Haliburton County is a leading example of good environmental stewardship at work. We want to keep the momentum going… I'd love to stay in Haliburton for the next one, if we can make it happen," Pye said.

Highlander events



Booming voices

Highlands Festival Singers held a ‘Groovin’ in the 60s’ concert at Haliburton United Church May 4 and 6, directed by Melissa Stephens. An acclaimed multi-instrumentalist, Stephens’ proficiency spans the piano, organ and flute. She has been a central figure with the Festival Singers, inspiring the group to a great show on Sunday and Tuesday.

Top left: Melissa Stephens, seated, conducts the choir. From left, Joan Hawley, Karen Armstrong, Patty Luubert, and Lynda Bowman. Top middle: Wendy Evenden belts out a song. Top right: Douglas Tindal holds a tune. Bottom left: Carol Bowker and Beth Jones have fun with their singing. Bottom middle: Festival Singers Anna Freobe, Beth Kipping, Betty Mills, Rita Jackson, Nancy McLuskey, Ed Canning, and Wendy Evenden, seated, during Sunday’s concert. Bottom right: Laurie McFarland reads and sings along with her sheet music. *Photos by Steve Sherwood.*

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Highlander events

Earning their stripes

Eighty-three students from Stuart Baker Elementary, J.D. Hodgson Elementary, and Hal High participated in the Haliburton Legion's Remembrance Day literacy and poster contest last year, with 12 entries winning at the zone level and three winning at district. Carolyn Millard, the Legion's youth education chair, shared a touching story about her father's service in the Navy. Last summer, she travelled to Halifax, NS and toured the Sackville Corvette. Millard said her father served in the Navy with the Parry Sound Corvette as a submarine detector.

Top left: Legion president Mike Waller presents Triston Humphries with his awards. Humphries took second in the local colour poster and third in the essay contest for the intermediate grades. Top middle: June and Hadley Judson each submitted written pieces, with June winning first at zones and placing second in districts in the junior essay contest. Top right: Liam Bird sings O Canada on the stage to open the ceremony. Bottom Left: A group shot of the zone F4 winners. Bottom middle: Ellie and Kerozie Bishop sporting some wartime memorabilia. Bottom right: Waller and Carolyn Millard present Eden Kuepfer with her first place award in the junior poem contest, for students in grades four, five and six. *Photos by Steve Sherwood.*

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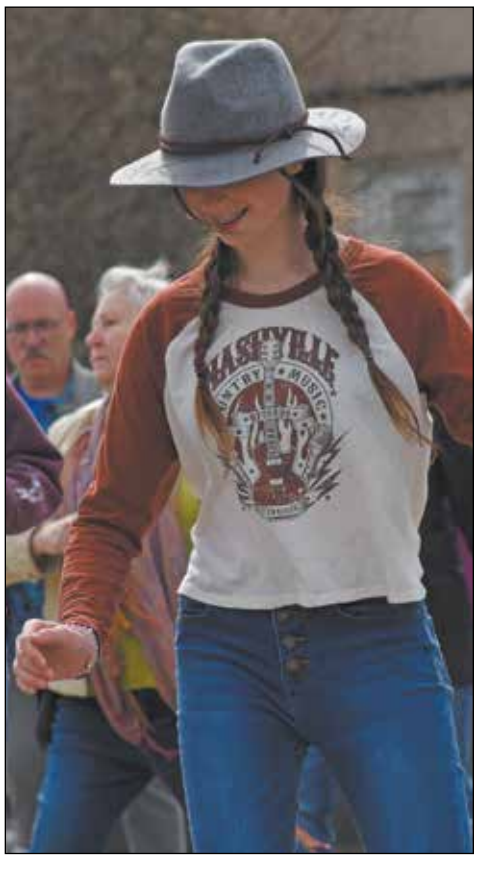

Boot scootin' boogie

Always in Boots Country Dancing brought some fun to Haliburton village May 3, hosting a local International Line Dance Flash Mob event at Head Lake Park. The group joined a global effort, with more than a dozen dancers performing choreographed moves to Shaboozey's *A Bar Song*. Karley Stevenson, who owns Always in Boots Country Dancing, said she worked with dancers for weeks leading up to the event.

Top: Karley Stevenson leads a group of dancers during Saturday's International Line Dance Flash Mob in Haliburton. Middle left: The group gets in-sync. Middle right: Jesse Hannah, and Jashelle and Frost Kitcheman feel the energy of the flash mob. Bottom left: Stevenson grooving to the beat. Bottom middle: Frost Kitcheman is all smiles, dancing while sporting a cowboy hat and country music t-shirt. Bottom right: Janet Grant and Don Critchley move to the beat while line dancing. Right strip: Quintessential line dancing boots.
Photos by Steve Sherwood.

What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Bridge at 1 p.m. in the Schofield Room. Youth darts league, for ages 10 to 18, at 6:30 p.m. in the clubroom. All are welcome.
Tuesdays: League darts starting at 7 p.m in the clubroom. Haliburton Army Cadets practice 6:30-9 p.m. between September and June.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo 5 p.m. doors open, 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. Snack bar available – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m, tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom.
Saturdays: Open only for special events
Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.

Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for rental information call Cheryl Waller at 905- 447-7741, email haliburtonlegionrentals@gmail.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com/facility-rentals Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129…everyone is welcome!

The Legion's mandate is to help veterans, assist with their mental and physical health and social wellbeing, provide a feeling of togetherness and combat isolation. All are welcome to attend our events.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
Weekly activities:
Karaoke: call for dates
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week.
Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Mondays: open 7 to 10 p.m.
Tuesdays: closed
Wednesdays: open 2 to 6 p.m.
Thursdays: open 2 to 10 p.m.
Fridays: open 2 to 11 p.m.
Saturdays: open 2 to 9 p.m.
Sundays: closed, special events only

Darts at 7 p.m. May 5, 12, 19 and 26 Cost is $5 per player. Afternoon sessions are May 7, 14, 21 and 28 starting at 2 p.m. Cost is $4 per player.

We have suspended our cornhole league.

HHHS social recreation May 8 at 10 a.m.

Fish and chips May 2, 16 and 30 from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is $15 for one piece, $20 for two pieces.

Wings and jam session May 9 and 23 from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is $15 per pound.

EVENTS

Muskoka/Haliburton District 11 is holding its 55+ summer games throughout May and June. Join us for bowling, cards, golf, pickleball, shuffleboard, tennis, and walking. Visit district11.osga55plus.ca for more information, or call 705-749-3787. Registration deadline for the final event is May 30.

May 10, 10 a.m. the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust kicks off a new 'Discovery Days' season with a workshop on spring wildflowers and wild leeks at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve. Registration is required, admission by donation. Visit haliburtonlandtrust.ca or call 705-457-3700 to reserve a spot.

May 10, 10 a.m. to noon. Minden Pride is hosting 'Vision 2025: The Future of Pride' event at Pinestone Resort. Learn about this year's Pride festival and help shape the future of the organization in Haliburton County. Refreshments available from 9:30 a.m.

May 10, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Haliburton County Farmers Market kicks off its 2025 season in Minden, with this year's vendors offering seasonal produce, meats, cheeses, baked goods, preserves, prepared foods, hand-crafted artisan items and more. Takes place every Saturday in downtown Minden. The Haliburton event, hosted at Head Lake Park, debuts May 13, running every Tuesday until Oct. 7.

May 10, 4:30 to 10 p.m. Minden Curling Club Spring Dance. Cost to attend the dinner and dance is $45 per person, or $25 for just the dance. Music by The Recycled Teenagers and Lloyd and Susanne Taylor. Tickets available at Let's Get Local and Molly's Market Bakery. This is a fundraiser for the curling club.

May 11, 2 p.m. Razzamataz Kids' Shows presents 'Kattam and his Tam Tams' at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton. Workshop to follow at 3:15 p.m. For tickets or more information, visit razzamatazz.ca.

May 13, 4 to 5:30 p.m. Join the community's new ukulele group at the Stanhope branch of the Haliburton County Public Library. Bring your instrument and learn with us. No registration required. We meet every other Tuesday.

May 13, 7 p.m. You are invited to participate in a discussion with Theresa Maybury, a mental health and addictions clinician with the Canadian Mental Health Association, who will explore mental health with an emphasis on anxiety and depression. Live music from Jodi Timgren to open. No admission, light refreshments provided. Hosted by the Baha'I community of Haliburton County.

May 14, 7 to 9 p.m. County entrepreneur Chris Hughes is the latest Speaker Series guest, appearing in-person at the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association fish hatchery to discuss his 26-year career in tourism development and the places it's taken him. Cost is $15 per person.

May 15, 7 p.m. The Canadian Federation of University Women Haliburton Highlands is hosting a night with Barrie Martin, one of the founders of the Haliburton County Folk Society and creator of Telling Our Stories Speaker Series. Taking place at the Haliburton School of Art + Design. All are welcome.

What's on

Ed and Tamara Poropat on a bird walk. *Submitted.*

Land Trust discovery days soon to kick off

By Lisa Gervais

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) has announced the TD Friends of the Environment has granted funding to support Land Trust Discovery Days 2025.

The Land Trust has offered discovery days for many years as part of its initiative to provide educational workshops for people of all ages to learn about nature.

Their volunteer education committee is working hard to plan and organize a series of family-oriented events, the HHLT said.

The first discovery day, Spring Wildflowers and Wild Leeks, will take place on Saturday, May 10 at Barnum Creek Nature Reserve at 10 a.m. "Michele Swyer will offer her expertise and enthusiasm for these delicate and fleeting early spring ephemerals," the Land Trust said.

The Don Smith Memorial Bird Walk will be offered by bird expert Ed Poropat on Sunday, May 18 at 6:30 a.m. on the rail trail at Gould's Crossing Road.

The events are offered by donation. Registration is required and can be done by visiting haliburtonlandtrust.ca, events.

Other programs to look forward to this year include Busy Beavers and more.

"HHLT will also offer three events under our funding for the Partners in Conservation (PIC) program. The first in this series of events is on exploring the basics of digital mapping with the Avenza Maps app. Later in the season, PIC's will be offered a chance to learn about invasive species and join a hands-on trail building workshop," the Land Trust said. It encouraged people to view their website and Facebook page for updated information and registration.

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EVENT - Norwood Country Jamboree - July 17-20. Tickets available at Wilson Tire & Battery, Lindsay or 1-800-954-9998

EVENT

Annual Plant Sale: Sun May 18 & Mon May 19, 10-4 Organic veggie seedlings, perennials, maple syrup & eggs. Tory Hill, across from Tory Hill Park. highway 118/503, follow signs. Contact Liz: hilltopharvest705@gmail.com

YARD SALE

YARD SALE – 1263 Burkes Road, Haliburton (off Hwy 118) Saturday, May 10th & Sunday, May 11th from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Household items, furniture, garage stuff, tires and much more.

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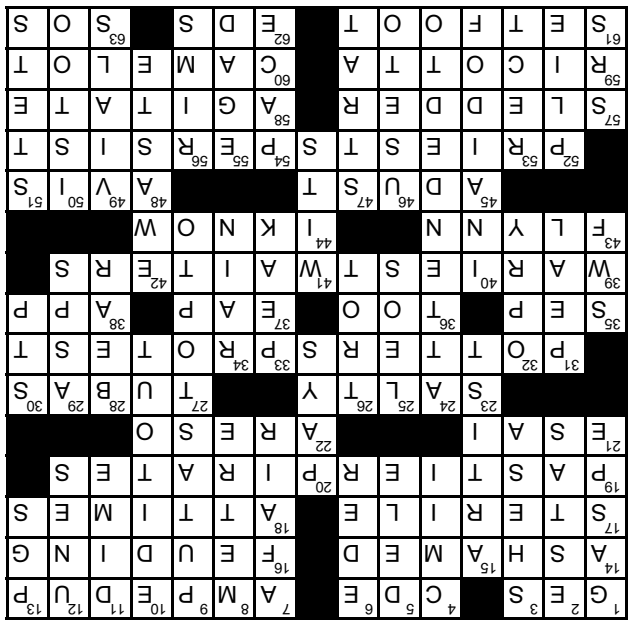
CAS MATTERS
LEGAL AID ACCEPTED

Courts: MINDEN • LINDSAY • PETERBOROUGH • BANCROFT

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS



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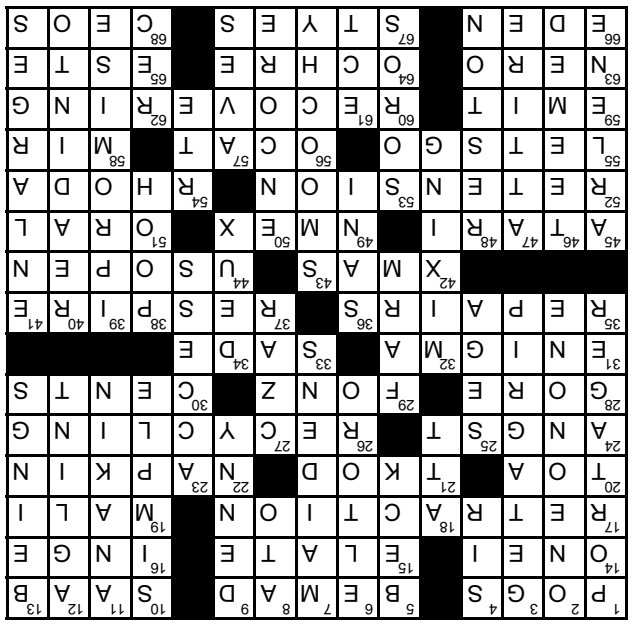
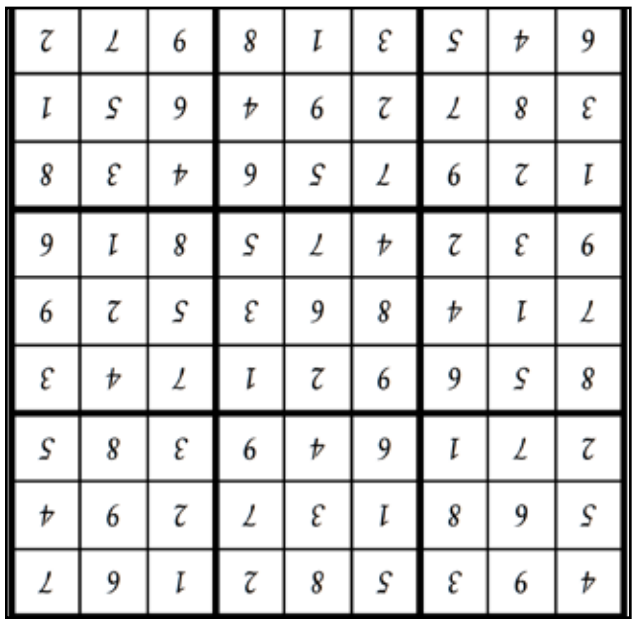




HELP WANTED

NOW HIRING

SUMMER POSITION @ THE LINK

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION OFFICER
- Customer Service
- Marketing & Content Creation
- Program Development
- Administrative Support

POSITION DETAILS:
- June 2 to August 22 2025
- 12-week contract
- 35 hours/week at $20.00/hour
- Must be 15-30 years old & eligible for Canada Summer Jobs

To apply, email your **Cover Letter** and **Resume** to ebarlow@haliburtoncdc.ca by **May 16, 2025**

If you need assistance/accommodation, call 705-457-3555.

Full details/job description at https://www.haliburtoncdc.ca/about-us/opportunities/

HCDC HALIBURTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION A Community Futures Development Corporation | the link

HALIBURTON ELECTRIC

WE ARE HIRING

JOB POSITION

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
HALIBURTON, ON | FULL-TIME (MAT LEAVE REPLACEMENT)
START: MAY 2025 | IN-OFFICE | **DEADLINE:** MAY 11, 2025

HALIBURTON ELECTRIC IS HIRING A DETAIL-ORIENTED OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR TO SUPPORT PAYROLL, A/P & A/R (QUICKBOOKS), SUPPLIER PAYMENTS, INVENTORY, AND CUSTOMER INQUIRIES. PRIOR EXPERIENCE IN OFFICE ADMINISTRATION AND QUICKBOOKS IS REQUIRED. MUST BE ORGANIZED, SELF-MOTIVATED, AND ABLE TO WORK ON-SITE MON-FRI, 8 AM-4 PM.

SEND YOUR CV AND COVER LETTER TO:
info@haliburtonelectric.com

HALIBURTON ELECTRIC LTD.
705-455-6886
HALIBURTON, ON

CANOE 100.9 & 97.1 FM www.CanoeFM.com

WORK WITH US THIS SUMMER!

Canada Summer Jobs Opportunity
Media Coordinator – Summer Position

Canoe FM is hiring a Media Coordinator for an 8-week summer position through the Canada Summer Jobs program. We're looking for a friendly, motivated, service-oriented team player to join our community radio station.

Start Date: June 16, 2025

Hours: 35 hours per week (flexible hours, including some Saturdays)

Wage: $20.00/hour

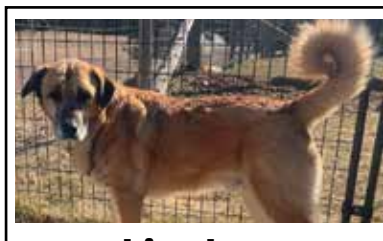
Eligibility: Applicants must be between the ages of 15 and 30 in accordance with Canada Summer Jobs funding requirements.

To view the full job description visit:
www.canoefm.com
To apply, send your resume to:
manager@canoefm.com

Deadline to apply: May 16, 2025

JOIN US IN BRINGING GREAT COMMUNITY RADIO TO HALIBURTON COUNTY!

LOST / FOUND



Found in the town of Haliburton

Found in the town of Haliburton during the ice storm weekend, we've named him Claude. We've created the best social media posts to help find his owners, but unfortunately, we haven't received any responses yet. Proof of ownership would be required. If the owners aren't found, this happy and friendly dog needs to find a forever home. If you're interested in fostering or adopting him, please contact Paws at 705-854-0055 or email paws@killarastation.com.

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Arthurlene Greer

Passed away peacefully at the Haliburton Hospital on Monday, May 5, 2025 at the age of 94.

Beloved wife of the late Lorne Greer (2013) for 67 years. Loving mother of the late Harvey (2022)(Donalda)(2024), Fay Brown (the late Jim)(2012) (Ken Millar), Wendy Daly (Mark Mercer), Marion Gartshore (Scott) and Leon (Charmaine). Survived by her 9 grandchildren; Lorne (Janet), Dianna (Clayton), Derek (Janene), Blayne (Jessica), Wayde, Gavin (Nichole), Natasha (Jeff), Joseph (Lina), Lisa (Dave) and by her 15 great grandchildren Jordyn, Jakob, Hayden, Jackson, Riley, Trista, Davis, Darren, Hannah, Collin, Cooper, Stella, Lucas, Oliver and Teddy. Predeceased by her parents Arthur and Pearl (nee Bailey) Davis, by her sisters Georgina, Ada, Mary, Alma, Daisy, Lucy and by her brother Thomas. Fondly remembered by her many nieces, nephews, family and friends.

A Private Family Interment Service will be held at the Pine Grove Cemetery, Norland on Saturday, May 31, 2025 and then the family will receive friends for a drop-in get together at the Norland Recreation Centre, 7675 Hwy 35, Norland, Ontario K0M 2L0 from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm. Cremation has taken place.

Memorial Donations to the Salvation Army Fenelon Falls or to a charity of your choice would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

www.gordonmonkfuneralhome.com

WANTED

WANTED ANTIQUES

Furniture, old signs, gold or costume jewellery, wrist and pocket watches, old coins, sterling silver, teacups, china, books, records, miltary items, paintings, **anything old**.

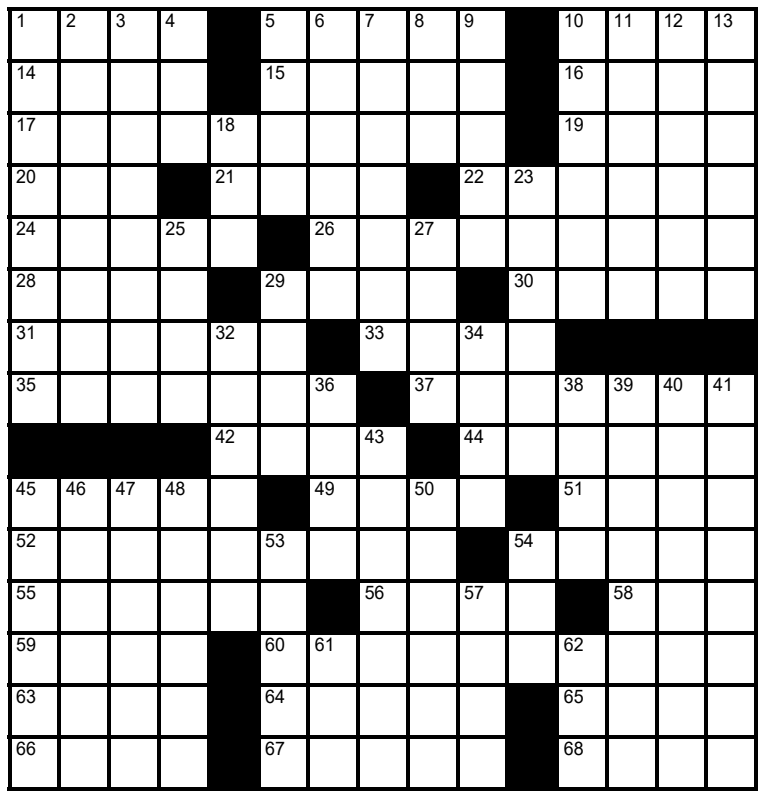
BOB CARRUTH • 705-887-1672

READ THE HIGHLANDER NEWSPAPER.
ANYWHERE.

Highlander puzzles

It's About This

by Barbara Olson
© ClassiCanadian Crosswords

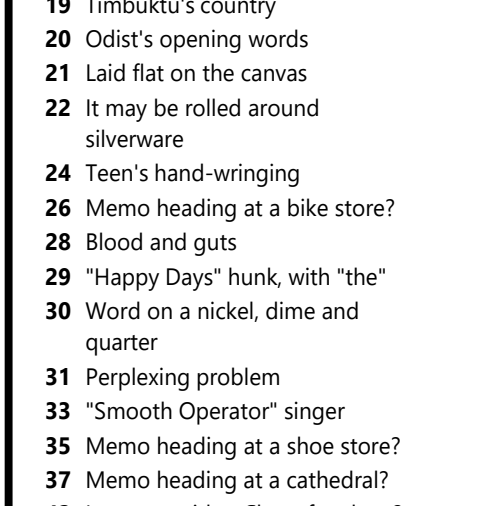


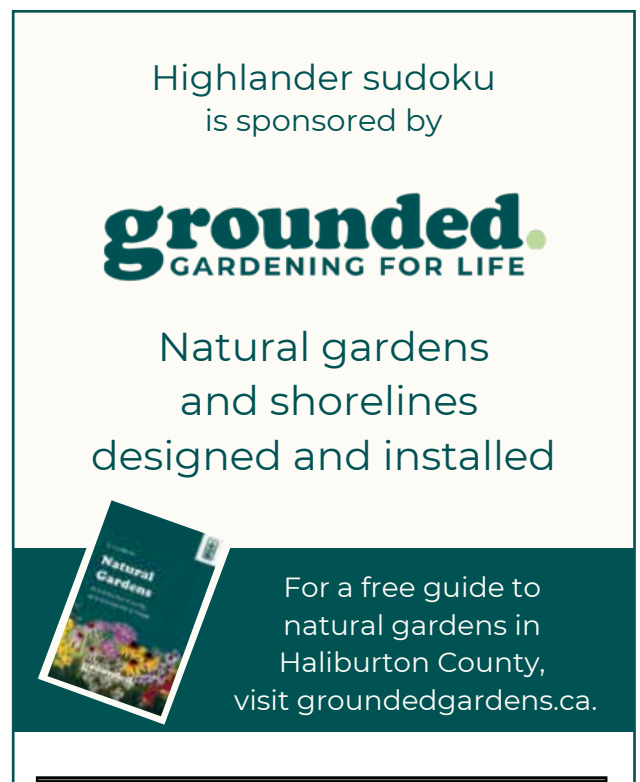
Across

1 Faddish discs of the '90s
5 "You must ___!" (response to a crazy idea)
10 Defunct Swedish automaker
14 "That's ___ hadn't heard before"
15 Send over the moon
16 "Picnic" playwright
17 Memo heading at a tire store?
19 Timbuktu's country
20 Odist's opening words
21 Laid flat on the canvas
22 It may be rolled around silverware
24 Teen's hand-wringing
26 Memo heading at a bike store?
28 Blood and guts
29 "Happy Days" hunk, with "the"
30 Word on a nickel, dime and quarter
31 Perplexing problem
33 "Smooth Operator" singer
35 Memo heading at a shoe store?
37 Memo heading at a cathedral?
42 It comes with a Claus, for short?
44 PGA Tour competition
45 25-Down rival
49 Its capital is Sante Fe: Abbr.
51 ___ hygiene (dentist's concern)
52 Memo heading at a massage clinic?
54 TV friend of Mary Richards
55 "C'mon, I wanna move!"
56 One-___ (old ball game)
58 Russian space station, once
59 Give off
60 Memo heading at media outlet?
63 Fiddling emperor
64 Yellowish hue
65 Spanish "east"
66 Actress Barbara of "I Dream of Jeannie"
67 Eyelid afflictions
68 Corp. top-rungers: Abbr.

Down

1 Canoe carrier, as a coureur des bois
2 Face-to-face meeting
3 Comment to a needless panicker
4 Round Table title
5 ___ and call
6 Matador's foe
7 Fair young ladies
8 From ___ Z
9 First name in a breakfast chain
10 Like a 101 course, often
11 Luke Skywalker's dad
12 Reflecting sunlight, maybe
13 Living creatures
18 "Street Legal" fig.
23 It may be denied without a password
25 Dreamcast console maker
27 One spelling of a Russian ruler
29 Have a growing business
32 Chatting with other guests, say
34 What it takes to tango, in Toulouse
36 ___-Flush (toilet cleanser)
38 Fictional "hunny" lover
39 Swear words?
40 Be overly analytical about
41 Blows up, as a photo
43 Kissy-kissy
45 Dickinson, formerly of "Dragon's Den"
46 Went over the top
47 Nudist's lack
48 Sit atop
50 Concert-goers' "More!"
53 Philanthropist George
54 GPS suggestion: Abbr.
57 Some city rtes.
61 Word form for "outer"
62 ___ centre (sports complex)





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						6	5	
					8		7	2

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Haliburton County's Local Real Estate Team.

KENNISIS LAKE
$2,299,000

5X BED | 3X BATH | MLS X12110017

KASHAGAWIGAMOG LAKE
$1,275,000

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12121172

KENNISIS LAKE
$1,175,000

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12110371

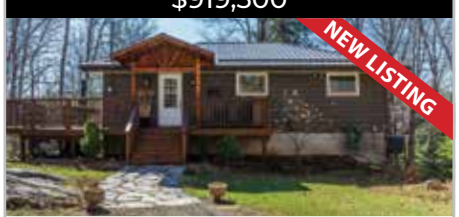
EAGLE LAKE
$999,900

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12029422

HALIBURTON LAKE
$925,000

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12074153

NEGAUNNEE LAKE
$919,500



3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X 12120338

SILVER BEACH
$749,500

3X BED | 4X BATH | MLS X12071612

EAGLE LAKE AREA
$699,900

2X BED | 1X BATH | MLS X12095585

KENNISIS LAKE
$699, 500

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12116621

CANNING LAKE
$675,000

3X BED | 1X BATH | MLS X12112897

CRANBERRY LAKE
$650,000

2X BED | 1X BATH | MLS X12101365

RIVERSIDE DRIVE
$625,000

4X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12101365

LONG LAKE
$595,000

3X BED | 1X BATH | MLS X12104175

SILVER BEACH
$595,000

3X BED | 3X BATH | MLS X12019003

WILBERFORCE
$575,000

3X BED | 2X BATH | MLS X12093164

OAKVIEW CO-LIVING
STARTING AT $319,000

3 UNITS AVAILABLE
UNIT 1, 2 AND 4

VACANT LAND FOR SALE

Haliburton Lake Road
MLS X10437518
$250,000
14.53 Acres

Bethel Road
MLS X11955874
SOLD
$178,000
25 Acres

Lakeview Street
MLS X12034950
$149,900
1.47 Acres

Grace River Road
MINER LAKE
MLS X12059917
$135,900
2.56 AcresAcres

Basshaunt Lake Road
MLS X10437016
$109,000
2.19 Acres
*Vendor Takeback Available

Wenona Lake Road
MLS X11953943
$95,000
0.42 Acres

Lot 7 Broadleaf Road
MLS X11985022
SOLD
$50,000
1.51 Acres

Lot 8 Broadleaf Road
MLS X11985025
SOLD
$50,000
1.48 Acres

Lot 10 Broadleaf Road
MLS X11985027
SOLD
$50,000
1.77 Acres

Lot 11 Broadleaf Road
MLS X11985029
SOLD
$50,000
1.40 Acres

FEATURED LISTING

1816 Trappers Trail

$919,500

Haliburton

Negaunne Lake

Linda Baumgartner - Broker of Record | Owner
(705) 457.3461
contact@baumgartnerrealty.ca
www.baumgartnerrealty.ca

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